

What is claimed is:

1. In a communication system having a mail server and a plurality of electronic devices which are connected with a network, a predetermined e-mail address being assigned to said plurality of electronic devices, each of said plurality of electronic devices comprising:

a first determination system that determines whether an e-mail address of an e-mail message transmitted to said mail server coincides with the predetermined e-mail address;

a second determination system that determines whether the e-mail message addressed to the predetermined e-mail address is directed to the electronic device to which said second determination system belongs in accordance with contents of the e-mail message addressed to the predetermined e-mail address; and

a processing system that executes a procedure corresponding to the e-mail message when said second determination system determines that the e-mail message is directed to the electronic device to which said second determination system belongs.

2. The electronic device according to claim 1, further comprising a destination device information obtaining system that obtains information of a destination device of the e-mail

message in accordance with the contents of the e-mail message, said second determination system determining whether the e-mail message is directed to the electronic device to which said second determination system belongs in accordance with whether the information of the destination device designates the electronic device to which said second determination system belongs.

3. The electronic device according to claim 2,

wherein the information of the destination device designates the electronic device to which said second determination system belongs and at least one other electronic device, the information of the destination device designating the electronic device to which said second determination system belongs and said at least one other electronic device,

wherein each of said plurality of electronic device includes:

an e-mail updating system that updates the e-mail message in said mail server by creating a modified e-mail message which is similar to the e-mail message except that the information of the destination device is modified such that the information designating the electronic device to which said second determination system belongs is deleted and transmits the modified e-mail message to the predetermined e-mail address and by deleting the e-mail message including the unmodified

information and stored in the mail server; and

an e-mail deleting system that deletes the e-mail message from said mail server when the information of the destination device obtained by said destination device information obtaining system only designates the electronic device to which said second determination system belongs to.

4. The electronic device according to claim 2, wherein the e-mail message includes a first character string having a predetermined character string followed by a second character string having information designating the destination device.

5. The electronic device according to claim 1, wherein the e-mail message has attached data to be processed,

wherein each of said plurality of electronic device has data type obtaining system that obtains a data type of the attached data from the contents of the e-mail message, and

wherein said second determination system determines whether the e-mail message is directed to the electronic device to which said second determination system belongs based on whether the attached data can be processed by said electronic device.

6. The electronic device according to claim 6, wherein

processing of the attached data including printing of the attached data.

7. The electronic device according to claim 6, wherein the attached data is TIFF-F format data.

8. The electronic device according to claim 1, further comprising an e-mail deleting system that deletes the e-mail message corresponding to the procedure executed by the processing system from the mail server.

9. The electronic device according to claim 1, further comprising an e-mail deleting system that deletes the e-mail message corresponding to the procedure executed by the processing system from the mail server predetermine period after the procedure has been executed.

10. The electronic device according to claim 1, wherein the procedure executed by said processing system includes creation and transmission of a replying e-mail message replying to the e-mail message.

11. The electronic device according to claim 10,
wherein the e-mail message contains a request for a status of the electronic device, and

wherein the replying e-mail message contains a status of the electronic device to which the processing system belongs.

12. The electronic device according to claim 1,

wherein the e-mail message has attached data to be processed, and

wherein processing of the attached data including printing of the attached data.

13. A communication system having a mail server, an electronic devices and at least one terminal device which is managed by said electronic device, a predetermined e-mail address being assigned to said electronic device, said electronic device comprising:

a first determination system that determines whether an e-mail address of an e-mail message transmitted to said mail server coincides with the predetermined e-mail address;

a second determination system that determines whether the e-mail message addressed to the predetermined e-mail address is directed to one of the electronic device and said at least one of terminal device in accordance with contents of the e-mail message addressed to the predetermined e-mail address; and

a processing system that executes a procedure corresponding to the e-mail message when said second determination system determines that the e-mail message is

directed to one of said electronic device and said at least one terminal device.

14. The communication system according to claim 13, wherein said electronic device includes a destination device information obtaining system that obtains information of a destination device of the e-mail message in accordance with the contents of the e-mail message, said second determination system determining whether the e-mail message is directed to said electronic device or said at least one terminal device in accordance with the information of the destination device.

15. The communication system according to claim 13, further comprising an e-mail deleting system that deletes the e-mail message corresponding to the procedure executed by the processing system from said mail server.

16. The communication system according to claim 13, further comprising an e-mail deleting system that deletes the e-mail message corresponding to the procedure executed by the processing system from said mail server predetermine period after the procedure has been executed.

17. The communication system according to claim 13, wherein the procedure executed by said processing system includes

creation and transmission of a replying e-mail message replying to the e-mail message.

18. The communication system according to claim 17,
wherein the e-mail message contains a request for a status of the designating device,

wherein said electronic device obtains status information of said at least one terminal device in accordance with a predetermined communication protocol when the request is for the status of said at least one terminal device; and

wherein the replying e-mail message contains a status of one of the electronic device and said at least one terminal device.

19. The communication system according to claim 17,
wherein the e-mail message contains a request for the status of the designating device, and

wherein a replying e-mail message contains the status of the designated device.

20. The communication system according to claim 18, wherein the status includes at least one of a remaining amount of toner and a remaining amount of sheet.

21. An electronic device for a communication system having

a mail server and a plurality of electronic devices which are connected with a network, a predetermined e-mail address being assigned to said electronic device, said electronic device comprising:

a first determination system that determines whether an e-mail address of an e-mail message transmitted to said mail server coincides with the predetermined e-mail address;

a second determination system that determines whether the e-mail message addressed to the predetermined e-mail address is directed to said electronic device in accordance with contents of the e-mail message addressed to the predetermined e-mail address; and

a processing system that executes a procedure corresponding to the e-mail message when said second determination system determines that the e-mail message is directed to said electronic device.

22. An electronic device for a communication system having a mail server, an electronic devices and at least one terminal device which is managed by said electronic device, a predetermined e-mail address being assigned to said electronic device, said electronic device comprising:

a first determination system that determines whether an e-mail address of an e-mail message transmitted to said mail server coincides with the predetermined e-mail address;

a second determination system that determines whether the e-mail message addressed to the predetermined e-mail address is directed to one of the electronic device and said at least one of terminal device in accordance with contents of the e-mail message addressed to the predetermined e-mail address; and

a processing system that executes a procedure corresponding to the e-mail message when said second determination system determines that the e-mail message is directed to one of said electronic device and said at least one terminal device.

23. A computer for a communication system having a mail server and a plurality of electronic devices which are connected with a network, said computer being connected with the mail server, said computer including:

an e-mail creating system that creates an e-mail message, the e-mail message being addressed to an e-mail address which is commonly used by the plurality of electronic devices;

an electronic device selecting system that enables an operator of said computer to select at least one of said plurality of electronic devices, information indicative of the selected one of said plurality of electronic devices being inserted in the e-mail message; and

an information designating system that enables the operator to designate information to be obtained from the

selected at least one of the plurality of electronic devices, information indicative of the designated information being inserted in the e-mail message,

the communication system being configured such that only the designated at least one of the plurality of electronic device processes the e-mail message, the e-mail message being transmitted to the mail server.

24. The computer according to claim 23, wherein the communication system is configured such that, when the mail server receives the e-mail message including the information indicative of the designating at least one of the plurality of electronic devices and information indicative of the designated information, a replying e-mail message containing a status in terms of the designated information of the designated at least one of the plurality of electronic devices being transmitted to said computer.

25. The computer according to claim 24, further comprising a display, a visual interface being provided so as to display a window on said display, the window allowing the operator to select at least one of the plurality of electronic devices sharing the common e-mail address, the visual interface inserting information indicative of the selected at least one of the plurality of electronic devices in the e-mail message.

26. The computer according to claim 25, where the window displayed on said display allows the operator to select one or more pieces of information to be obtained from the designated one of the plurality of electronic devices, the visual interface inserting information indicative of the one or more pieces of information to be obtained from the designated at least one of the plurality of electronic devices in the e-mail message.

27. A computer program product that controls a computer to function as an electronic device for a communication system having a mail server and a plurality of electronic devices which are connected with a network, a predetermined e-mail address being assigned to the electronic device, the computer program product comprising the instructions of:

determining whether an e-mail address of an e-mail message transmitted to the mail server coincides with the predetermined e-mail address;

determining whether the e-mail message addressed to the predetermined e-mail address is directed to the electronic device in accordance with contents of the e-mail message addressed to the predetermined e-mail address; and

executing a procedure corresponding to the e-mail message when it is determined that the e-mail message is directed to the electronic device.

28. A computer program product that controls a computer to function as an electronic device for a communication system having a mail server, an electronic devices and at least one terminal device which is managed by the electronic device, a predetermined e-mail address being assigned to the electronic device, the computer program product comprising the instructions of:

determining whether an e-mail address of an e-mail message transmitted to the mail server coincides with the predetermined e-mail address;

determining whether the e-mail message addressed to the predetermined e-mail address is directed to one of the electronic device and the at least one of terminal device in accordance with contents of the e-mail message addressed to the predetermined e-mail address; and

executing a procedure corresponding to the e-mail message when it is determined that the e-mail message is directed to one of the electronic device and the at least one terminal device.